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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 000850

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/ERA, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/02/2015

TAGS: PREL AORC ELAB KIPR IS WIPO EUN USEU BRUSSELS

SUBJECT: ISRAEL IN IO'S: DRAFT EU ACTION PLAN SUGGESTS PARTIAL PROGRESS

REF: A. A) STATE 35846

1B. B) 04 STATE 235219

Classified By: USEU POLOFF TODD HUIZINGA, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Our EU interlocutors told us the EU plans to discuss Israeli membership in UN groups on March 8, after which the Luxembourg EU presidency will draft a formal reply to ref A demarche. In their estimation, the EU might support Israeli membership in the more &technical groups⁸ (WIPO and CND), but not in the &political groups⁸ (UNEP, UN-HABITAT and IMEC). Recent positive developments in the Middle East peace process may influence the deliberations, however, and more importantly, the recently negotiated EU/Israel Action Plan will, pending expected approval, officially commit the EU to &work towards normalization of Israel's status in international organizations.⁸ END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

EU TO PREPARE REPLY ON ISRAEL IN UN GROUPS

12. (C) On March 2 USEU Poloff delivered ref A demarche to Paulo Oliveira, UN Desk Officer in the EU Council Secretariat, and Giancarlo Chevallard, Head of the UN Unit in

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the External Relations Directorate-General of the European Commission. Oliveira remarked that the EU, having taken on board last November's demarche on the same topic (ref B), planned to discuss the issue at the March 8 meeting of the EU Working Group on the UN (CONUN). If the member states reach agreement at the CONUN, the Luxembourg EU presidency will draft a formal EU reply to reftel demarches.

TECHNICAL GROUPS MIGHT BE OK

13. (C) Oliveira said the EU might &accept⁸ Israeli membership in the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) at the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), and in Group B of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The reason for the EU's possibly favorable attitude on Israeli membership in those groups, said Oliveira, is that they are mostly technical groups.

WAREY OF ISRAEL IN POLITICAL GROUPS

14. (C) Oliveira predicted that the EU would not favor Israeli membership in the Industrial Market Economy Committee (IMEC) group at the International Labor Organization (ILO), nor in the WEOG groups at the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and UN-HABITAT. His reasoning: those groups are political in nature, and &Israel's presence would not be helpful to discussions within these groups.⁸ Oliveira emphasized especially the importance of &questions relating to Palestinian rights⁸ in UNEP and UN-HABITAT.

MEPP DEVELOPMENTS MIGHT INFLUENCE EU

15. (C) When pressed on the unfairness of this discrimination against Israel, Oliveira replied that recent positive developments in the Middle East peace process might sway some EU member states to push for Israeli membership in all of the groups discussed above.

ACTION PLAN COMMITS EU TO HELP ISRAEL IN UN

16. (C) Giancarlo Chevallard of the EU Commission pointed out that the negotiated text of the EU-Israel Action Plan, the EU's blueprint for its relations with Israel under its European Neighborhood Policy, commits the EU to work toward normalizing Israel's position in the UN. Both Israel and the EU have blessed the text informally, and EU Foreign

Ministers are expected to approve the plan officially within the next few months. The relevant passage is: &(The EU and Israel will work) towards normalization of Israel,s status in international organizations and the reduction in the number of Middle East resolutions; (and) work to allow Israel to increase its contribution to effective multilateralism by means of the application of its expertise in appropriate activities of international organizations.⁸ The full text is available on the Commission website at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/document_en.htm.

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